

Research Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

California Dept. of Fish and Game Conference Room
20 Lower Ragsdale Rd.,
Monterey Calif.
June 17, 1994 - 0830 to 1200 hrs

Minutes taken and transcribed by:

Aaron King, Monterey Bay NMS - RAC Executive Coordinator

Member Attendees

Greg Cailliet, Moss Landing Marine Labs - RAC Chairman
Laura Ehret, Naval Postgraduate School
Steve Eittreim, USGS
Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium
Jim Harvey, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Cliff Hoskins, Department of the Interior
Terry Jackson, Manager, Monterey Bay NMS
Deborah Johnston, CA Dept. of Fish and Game / Monterey
Don Potts of UCSC
Stephen Mueller, Morro Bay Foundation
Bill Schramm, OAR
Gary Sharp, CIRIOS
Rick Starr, Univ. of CA, Sea Grant Advisory Program
Mark Stephenson of CDFG/Marine Pollution Studies
Lab Mary Yoklavich, NOAA/NMFS/PFEG

Members Not Able to Attend:

Andrew DeVogelaere, ESNERR and Foundation
Dennis Powers, Hopkins Marine Station
Bruce Robison, MBARI
Jan Roletto, GFNMS
Jim Rote, NOAA/OCRM
Les Strnad, CA Coastal Commission

Guest Attendees:

Donna Meyers, AMBAG
Holly Price, Center for Marine Conservation

Greg Cailliet, RAC Chair, introduced the meeting.

Quick discussion items:

Introductions - Introductions were made around the table and RAC membership substitutions announced. The Chair made special mention of the two new RAC members from the Department of the Interior and the Morro Bay Foundation.

Minutes - Mary Yoklavich made two corrections to the May 20, 1994 meeting minutes: 1) Frank Schwing had not yet completely agreed to be on, in an advisory capacity, the site characterization subcommittee, and 2) Steve Eittreim had agreed to be on the committee, replacing Gary Greene for the USGS. The corrected minutes were then unanimously approved.

Site Characterization RFP (King) - Aaron reported that the RFP for the Site Characterization was closed on June 15, though he did not know how many had been received. Aaron says that SRD HQ would contact the subcommittee when it was ready to have them review the proposals received. The Chair stated that he believed there was no need for any further action on this matter at this time. Rick Starr stated that an idea was floating around that at the Monterey Bay Research Symposium for the following year could be based on the results of the Site Characterization.

Report on the SAC meeting (Cailliet) - The Chair stated that he didn't have the recent SAC minutes available for passing out to the RAC members (as they weren't final yet), but that he could summarize the recent meeting. The meeting started with a public comment period (no comments), then proceeded with a Sanctuary Update by Terry and the Sanctuary staff, an update on where we stand with regard to a Sanctuary Foundation, a discussion of SAC administrative procedures, the creation of an administrative binder, the decision to have the SAC meetings on the 4th Friday of each month, a briefing on the Coast Guard's, NOAA's and CMC's perspectives on Vessel Traffic Safety within the Sanctuary (this is in preparation of a SAC workshop on Vessel Traffic Safety that will be taking place at the next meeting), an overview of the water quality protection program that the Sanctuary is sponsoring, an update on where ATOC stands (it was agreed that at this point the only thing the SAC can do is to keep track of what happens now) - At this point there was a brief discussion on what the RAC should be doing with regard to ATOC. It was agreed that when the revised marine mammal proposal came out (about a month according to Harvey), it would be directly forwarded to it. Maintaining a non-conflict of interest RAC image was again emphasized. The Chair also made mention of the facts that there was going to be an EIR Scoping meeting in La Jolla, and that ATOC was going to meet with the environmental groups in the near future to try and work out any continuing conflicts with them, and that Karin Strasser Kaufman would be representing the SAC at that. Aaron announced that ATOC's own marine mammal expert panel had recently met and that it had given ATOC the green light to proceed with the revised marine mammal research protocol, with some minor revisions.

The Chair then continued with his SAC summary - Jade cove was discussed at length, that included a presentation by Dr. Gretchen Luepke from the USGS and a decision to get the various concerned agencies together to work out an administrative solution, Liz Love gave an update on the use of signage to educate the public on the Sanctuary. During the wrapup, Greg again emphasized the need for a Research Coordinator.

Permit Report (King) - Aaron passed out and discussed a handout that summarized the various permits being worked on by the Sanctuary staff. Notes were made that David Cacchione's permit was on hold since he had found his proposed sites to be inadequate; that there was a policy being worked out in Washington to deal with fireworks; that the Sanctuary was waiting for a legal opinion on the shark chumming issue - This brought up a general discussion of what had to and what didn't have to be permitted. Part of this discussion centered around what authority for what types of activities the Sanctuary manager had signature authority for.

EcoNet Update (King) - Aaron said that everything seemed to be running smoothly, and that he would also try and do Internet mailings to RAC members of things he was uploading to the mbnms.rac conference. Aaron also announced the existence of a new conference called mbnms.csm (Coordinated Sanctuary Management) for use by management agencies within the Sanctuary's boundaries.

BREAK

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Role of RAC and its relationship to the SAC (Cailliet) -

The Chair pointed out and discussed a document he had written several months ago. The lengthy discussion that followed centered on the validity of using the RAC for discussions on non-research items, while they may simply require some good advice to the Sanctuary on science. Should this also be a role of the RAC? Proposals were made that this should be the RAC job, while others preferred such work to be handled by another method, such as having a full-time Research Coordinator.

The final outcome of this discussion, which was based on numerous documents including the FEIS/Management Plan for the MBNMS, the Potter Report, and the MBNMS Scientific Research Plan was a list of RAC roles that was agreed upon by unanimous consent:

1. Set research priorities that are primarily related to management of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.
2. Promote, encourage, and review research projects in the Sanctuary.
3. Provide scientific advice and objective information to the Sanctuary Advisory Council and Sanctuary management.
4. Review and advise on research permits in the Sanctuary.
5. Coordinate the annual Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Research Symposium.
6. Assist Sanctuary management with the organization and dissemination of information on research activities within the Sanctuary, including revision of the research database and directory of regional scientists.

OceanSearch Project (Schramm) - Bill handed out a two-page summary of what the OceanSearch Project (OSP) is. The OSP is the second generation of graphical user interface (first generation was known as FIN) that had previously been developed cooperatively between NOAA and Scripps IO. Recent funding for a NOAA/NOS Partnership Program will allow the local area to develop such a system here. At the present time several organizations have agreed to work to develop this system, including Scripps IO, Ca Coastal Commission, NOAA, UCSC, MBA and MBARI, but there is room for more involvement. Put simply, the purpose of OceanSearch is to remove the conventional barriers that exist between scientists/users and their data by providing the means to more easily combine and analyze heterogeneous data from a variety of sources. Information would be in three types: Atlas, Real-Time Data (satellites, etc.), and Historical Data Sets.

Research Permit Subcommittee Report (Strnad) - MBNMS received several comments, including a large package from MLML, which was forwarded to Washington. Aaron passed around a short note from Charlie Wahle in Washington on what comments were received. It was generally believed that at this point, plenty of comments had already been sent and that the time had come to set up the pilot program. There was some discussion on whether the other two working groups were being fully consulted and advised. It was generally felt that with Rachel Saunders being invited to sit on the RAC permit subcommittee, this was taken care of. The Sanctuary Staff agreed that they would keep the other two working groups informed of this issue as it arises.

Research Projects for Next Year's Budget (King/Cailliet)

- Aaron passed out a MBNMS staff wish list, together with comments that they had received from the RAC members to date, and requested input from the RAC on how it could make this list more complete/robust. It was pointed out that the MBNMS Research Plan already addressed the issue of research priorities, and should be heavily consulted and referenced in the budget request to Washington. The Chair suggested, and the RAC unanimously consented, that there be 3 major headings within this budget, and that the Sanctuary Manager try to reorganize the the budget to fit along these lines:

- 1) Continuation of Site Characterization project
- 2) Develop GIS capabilities that would benefit all future

research

3) Initiate Monitoring Studies. Terry will take the list of Monitoring aspects out of the Research Plan and put in pressing management issues with dollar amounts associated with it.

OTHER ITEMS:

Other Old Business - Hopkins Marine Station should be encouraged to be more active in the RAC.

New Business - The Research Coordinator should look into:

- 1) Creation of a list of documents, etc., that are available to the RAC for review about the Sanctuary, and,
- 2) Creation (update) of a consolidated Research Directory for the Sanctuary, possibly using Sam Farr's manual as a template.

Items for next meeting - None

MEETING ADJOURNED BY THE CHAIR.